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GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN, BRISBANE.

BULLETIN NO. 18 OF 1940 23 MAY 1940

Confidential until released for publication as under:-

Morning Papers	..	21st May, 1940.
Evening Papers	..	21st May, 1940.

RETAIL PRICES - MARCH QUARTER, 1940.

Food and Rent (4 and 5 Roomed Houses) "B" Series.

Index numbers for March Quarter 1940 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State capitals) were,- Brisbane 865, Toowoomba 836, Rockhampton 852, Townsville 920, Bundaberg 811, Charters Towers 827 and Warwick 788.

From December Quarter 1939 to March quarter 1940 this index showed small rises in all cities but Warwick where there was no alteration. The percentage increases were,- Brisbane 1.17, Toowoomba 0.97, Rockhampton 1.43, Townsville 0.77, Bundaberg 1.25, and Charters Towers 0.61. Food and Grocery costs rose in all cities but Warwick where there was a small decrease. Rents were very stable in all cities, Warwick showing the greatest variation (a rise of 1.02 per cent.). In Brisbane from December to March the chief increases were tea, potatoes, eggs, beef and mutton.

Compared with March Quarter 1939 there were decreases in the combined Food and Rent Index in Brisbane (0.57 per cent.), Toowoomba (0.71 per cent.), Rockhampton (0.23 per cent), Townsville (1.50 per cent.), and Bundaberg (0.25 per cent.), and slight increases in Charters Towers (1.60 per cent.) and Warwick (0.90 per cent.).

Food and Groceries were a little cheaper in all cities and rents showed only a slight rise in the five larger cities, and in Charters Towers and Warwick rose 10.38 and 6.65 per cent. respectively. The average rent of four and five roomed houses in Brisbane was 229.70d. in February 1939 and 230.49d. in February 1940.

All Items - "C" Series.

Index numbers for March quarter 1940 (with base 1000 in 1923-27 for the six State capitals) were, - Brisbane 887, Toowoomba 874, Rockhampton 887, Townsville 932, Bundaberg 860, Charters Towers 904, and Warwick 845.

From December Quarter 1939 to March quarter 1940 the percentage increases in the "All Items" Index were,- Brisbane 1.49, Toowoomba 1.39, Rockhampton 1.72, Townsville 1.19, Bundaberg 1.06, Charters Towers 0.89 and Warwick 0.36. As stated above there were small rises in food and grocery costs in all cities but Warwick and rents were stable. Clothing and footwear cost more in all cities and the miscellaneous group rose a little in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Rockhampton and Townsville and declined slightly in Bundaberg and Warwick (due to reduction in electricity tariffs). In Charters Towers there was practically no change in the group. In Brisbane percentage variations were,- food and groceries + 1.75 per cent., clothing and footwear + 3.35 per cent. and miscellaneous + 0.73 per cent., with no change in rents.

Compared with March Quarter 1939 the "C" index was higher in all towns. The percentage increases were,- Brisbane 1.49, Toowoomba 1.27, Rockhampton 1.84, Townsville 0.98, Bundaberg 1.30, Charters Towers 2.96, Warwick 1.81. Food and groceries were a little cheaper in all cities and rents practically the same except in Charters Towers and Warwick. Clothing and footwear were about 8 per cent. dearer in all cities. The miscellaneous group cost a little more than a year ago in all cities but Bundaberg. In Brisbane food and groceries declined 1.13 per cent., rent increased 0.35 per cent., clothing and footwear 7.84 per cent., and miscellaneous 1.68 per cent..

Compared with March Quarter 1933 when the Brisbane index reached the lowest point recorded in the depression year (747), the index was higher by 18.74 per cent..

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COMPARISON OF COSTS IN THE QUEENSLAND CITIES.

The following table shows the amounts necessary in March quarter 1940 to purchase what would have cost £1 in Brisbane.

City	All Items	Food and Groceries	Rent (4 and 5 Rooms)	Clothing and Footwear
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Brisbane ..	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0	1. 0. 0
Toowoomba ..	19. 8	19. 0	19.11	19.10
Rockhampton ..	1. 0. 0	1. 1. 0	17. 8	1. 0. 5
Townsville ..	1. 1. 0	1. 2. 0	1. 0. 2	1. 0. 6
Bundaberg ..	19. 5	1. 1. 1	15. 0	1. 0. 3
Charters Towers ..	1. 0. 5	1. 2. 1	14. 5	1. 0. 9
Warwick ..	19. 1	19. 7	16. 2	19. 6

COMPARISON OF COMMONWEALTH AND STATES BASIC WAGES.

In the following statement comparisons are made between Commonwealth and State Court basic wages in the various Capital Cities and States. The figures in the columns headed "Adjusted State Basic Wage" show the amounts a worker would require in Brisbane (or Queensland) to purchase the goods and services that he could buy with the State Basic Wages of other States. The margins between the Brisbane (or Queensland) figure and the other figures in these columns show the advantage to the Queensland State Basic Wage earner.

State	METROPOLITAN				WHOLE STATE a.		
	Price Index Nos. "C" Series	Commonwealth Basic Wage b.	State Basic Wage c.	Adjusted State Basic Wage d.	Price Index Nos. "C" Series	State Basic Wage c.	Adjusted State Basic Wage d.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Queensland ..	887	3.18. 0	4. 4. 0	4. 4. 0	888	4. 4. 8	4. 4. 8
New South Wales	946	4. 3. 0	4. 3. 0	3.17.10	943	4. 2.11	3.18. 1
Victoria ..	934	4. 2. 0	4. 2. 0	3.17.10	930	4. 1. 8	3.18. 0
S. Australia ..	912	3.18. 0	3.18. 0	3.15.10	907	3.18. 0	3.16. 4
W. Australia ..	902	3.17. 0	4. 2. 2	4. 0.10	916	4. 3. 3	4. 0. 8
Tasmania ..	918	3.18. 0	3.18. 0	3.15. 4	909	3.18. 0	3.16. 2

- Average for "5 towns" in each State, weighted by population.
- Corresponding to the March Quarter 1940 "Court" Index numbers with the addition of the special loadings. To be operative from beginning of first pay period in May.
- In New South Wales the Basic Wage of the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration is adopted in State Awards. Victoria and Tasmania have no declared State Basic Wage, but awards follow Commonwealth Rates to a large extent; and Commonwealth rates have been shown for these States. For Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia current State Basic Wages are shown.
- This represents the Basic Wage of each State with adjustments for differences in the cost of living (C Series).

## RETAIL PRICES INDEXES.

Table No. 1. FOOD, GROCERIES AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) - "B" SERIES.  
(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals).

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1939	Year Ending March 1940	QUARTERS ENDING.				
				March 1939	June 1939	Sept. 1939	Decr. 1939	March 1940
Brisbane ..	901	858	857	870	853	853	855	865
Toowoomba ..	833	830	829	842	826	825	828	836
Rockhampton ..	858	843	842	854	841	836	840	852
Townsville ..	1047	920	916	934	919	913	913	920
Bundaberg ..	(b)	804	804	813	802	800	801	811
Weighted Average - Five Towns (a)	892	858	856	869	853	853	855	864
Charters Towers	942	815	818	814	799	824	822	827
Warwick ..	841	783	785	781	778	784	788	788

Table No. 2. THE "ALL ITEMS" INDEX - "C" SERIES.

(Base = 1000 in 1923-27 in Six State Capitals).

CITY	Year Ending Decr. 1928	Year Ending Decr. 1939	Year Ending March 1940	QUARTERS ENDING.				
				March 1939	June 1939	Sept. 1939	Decr. 1939	March 1940
Brisbane ..	917	870	873	874	866	866	874	887
Toowoomba ..	906	858	861	863	855	853	862	874
Rockhampton ..	903	867	871	871	864	861	872	887
Townsville ..	1023	918	920	923	915	912	921	932
Bundaberg ..	(b)	847	850	849	845	843	851	860
Weighted Average - Five Towns (a)	915	871	875	875	867	867	876	888
Charters Towers	925	883	889	878	871	886	896	904
Warwick ..	914	834	838	830	830	834	842	845

(a) Prior to 1937 the five towns in the weighted averages included Charters Towers and Warwick which have now been replaced by Townsville and Bundaberg.

(b) Prices for Bundaberg were not collected prior to September quarter 1936.

Table No. 3. AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES - FOOD AND GROCERIES.

## Brisbane.

Commodity and Unit of Quantity.	MONTH OF			Commodity and Unit of Quantity.	MONTH OF		
	March 1939	Decr. 1939	March 1940		March 1939	Decr. 1939	March 1940
	d.	d.	d.		d.	d.	d.
Bread .. 2 lb.	5.50	5.75	5.75	Milk .. 1 qt.	6.00	6.00	6.00
Flour .. 2 lb.	4.05	4.05	4.05	Bacon(Rashers) 1 lb.	14.50	15.09	15.18
Tea .. 1 lb.	26.95	29.82	31.45	Beef - Sirloin			
Sugar .. 1 lb.	3.98	3.98	3.96	Roast .. 1 lb.	8.75	9.20	9.50
Jam (Plum) 1½ lb.	8.15	8.25	8.59	Beef - Steak			
Raisins .. 1 lb.	10.64	11.09	10.95	Rump .. 1 lb.	11.50	11.85	12.05
Potatoes .. 7 lb.	22.82	8.55	11.82	Beef - Rolled			
Onions .. 1 lb.	3.73	1.21	1.55	Brisket .. 1 lb.	5.60	5.80	6.00
Soap .. 1 lb.	6.15	6.15	6.18	Mutton - Leg 1 lb.	7.65	7.50	7.85
Butter .. 1 lb.	19.00	19.00	19.00	Mutton - Chops			
Cheese .. 1 lb.	13.27	13.27	13.36	Loin .. 1 lb.	7.60	7.65	7.80
Eggs .. 1doz.	19.27	15.45	21.91	Pork - Leg 1 lb.	11.45	11.45	11.60